

METHODS FOR REPAIRING DAMAGED INTERVERTEBRAL DISCS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Apparatus and methods for treating an intervertebral disc by ablation of disc
5 tissue. A method of the invention includes positioning at least one active electrode within the
intervertebral disc, and applying at least a first high frequency voltage between the active
electrode(s) and one or more return electrode(s), wherein the volume of the nucleus pulposus
is decreased, pressure exerted by the nucleus pulposus on the annulus fibrosus is reduced, and
discogenic pain of a patient is alleviated. In other embodiments, a curved or steerable probe
10 is guided to a specific target site within a disc to be treated, and the disc tissue at the target
site is ablated by application of at least a first high frequency voltage between the active
electrode(s) and one or more return electrode(s). A method of making an electrosurgical
probe is also disclosed.

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